

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6401

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 1721

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO

SUBJECT: PPD SYG SA CARNEIRO'S VIEWS ON CURRENT POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: SA CARNEIRO SEES PPD LEADING SOCIALISTS HEADING
INTO ELECTION CAMPAIGN. ISSUES WILL BE ECONOMY, UNEMPLOY-
MENT, AND DECOLONIZATION. HE UNDERSTANDS DANGERS OF ELECTION
STRATEGY WHICH PUSHES SOCIALISTS TOWARD COMMUNISTS, BUT
CLAIMS THAT PS-PCP COLLABORATION ON DISTRICT LEVEL IS A
FACT, AND THAT SOCIALIST "NO COALITION" APPROACH IS SERIOUS
ERROR. BEST POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT WOULD BE PS, PPD,
CDS COALITION. SA CARNEIRO DOES NOT FORESEE COMMUNIST
COUP ATTEMPT, BUT IS CONCERNED ABOUT RISING LABOR UNREST
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AND POSSIBLE EFFORTS TO POSTPONE ELECTIONS. HE BELIEVES

MELO ANTUNES IS MANEUVERING BEHIND THE SCENES WITH AIM OF BECOMING COMPROMISE PRIME MINISTER IN EVENT OF POST-ELECTION IMPASSE. AZEVEDO IS A GOOD MAN BUT A POOR POLITICIAN. ARMY IS UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT NAVY PRESIDENT. OTHER VIABLE PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITIES ARE ARMY BRIGADIER PIRES VELOSO AND AF GENERAL SILVA CARDOSO. EANES IS NEEDED AS ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF. COSTA GOMES HAS NO CHANCE OF REMAINING. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAD PRIVATE SESSION WITH SA CARNEIRO MARCH 16 ON CURRENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS. FOLLOWING SUMMARIZES MAJOR POINTS:

2. ELECTIONS: SA CARNEIRO THOUGHT SOCIALISTS (PS) WERE TOO OPTIMISTIC AS THEY APPROACH ELECTIONS. OPORTO SOCIALIST CONFERENCE HAD PRODUCED NOTHING TANGIBLE, AND THE RESULTING CLASH WITH PPD HAD COST SOARES SOME ELECTORAL SUPPORT. FRACAS OVER DINNER (LISBON 1665) HAD HURT AZEVEDO AS WELL. SA CARNEIRO RECOUNTED HIS SESSION WITH AZEVEDO IN WHICH HE "PERSUADED" HIM EITHER TO BACK OUT OF SOCIALIST DINNER OR FORM A NEW GOVERNMENT. SOARES WAS NOW "FURIOUS" WITH PPD, BUT SOCIALISTS HAD EXCEEDED ALL LIMITS OF PROPRIETY IN CALLING OPORTO CONFERENCE. THE SOCIALISTS WERE PLAGUED BY RECOGNITION OF MPLA ("A GREAT MISTAKE"), DECOLONIZATION, AGRICULTURAL REFORM, AND AN OBSTREPEROUS LEFT WING. A REALISTIC ELECTION PREDICTION, IN HIS VIEW, WOULD GIVE THE PPD ABOUT 35 PERCENT, PLACE THE SOCIALISTS IN THE LOW TWENTIES, AND THE CDS IN THE HIGH TEENS.

3. IN DISCUSSING THE SOCIALIST ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PCP, I REGISTERED TO SA CARNEIRO MY CONCERN ABOUT THE APPARENT PPD CAMPAIGN STRATEGY TO PORTRAY SOCIALISTS AS A TROJAN HORSE FOR THE PCP. CARTOONS SUCH AS RECENTLY APPEARED IN THE PPD NEWSPAPER DEPICTING SOARES AS A PRO-COMMUNIST ON ANGOLAN RECOGNITION WERE INACCURATE AND RISKY. ATTACKS WHICH PUSHED THE SOCIALISTS TOWARD THE PCP COULD PRODUCE ADVERSE REPERCUSSIONS NOT ONLY IN PORTUGAL BUT IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHERE SOCIALIST COALITIONS WITH THE COMMUNISTS WERE A LIVE ISSUE. SOARES HAD SO FAR TAKEN A CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS ON THIS POINT, A FACT WHICH SA CARNEIRO ACKNOWLEDGED.

4. SA CARNEIRO SAID HE APPRECIATED MY CONCERN ABOUT DRIVING THE SOCIALISTS TOWARD THE COMMUNISTS BUT SAID THAT PS-PCP COLLABORATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL WAS A FACT. IT IS TRUE THAT THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF THE PS HAD SO FAR RESISTED PCP BLANDISHMENTS -- PRINCIPALLY AS A

RESULT OF SALGADO ZENHA'S EFFORTS -- BUT THE LEFT WING LED BY (AGRICULTURE MINISTER) LOPES CARDOSO WAS VERY POWERFUL. THE DANGER OF THE LEFT WING PUSHING THE PS INTO AN ALLIANCE WITH THE PCP MADE SOARES'S "NO COALITION" POLICY ALL THE MORE INCOMPREHENSIBLE. IT IS UNLIKELY THE SOCIALISTS COULD FORM A STRONG GOVERNMENT ALONE, EVEN IF THEY WIN THE ELECTIONS. THE PPD COULD CONCEIVABLY FORM A COALITION WITH THE CDS, BUT IT WOULD BE FAR BETTER IF THE PS, THE PPD, AND THE CDS COULD FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT BASED ON A COMMON FOUR-YEAR PROGRAM. IF ONLY THE PS COULD FREE ITSELF OF ITS LEFT WING, SA CARNEIRO MUSED, THE PS AND THE PPD COULD MERGE INTO ONE LARGE "SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC" PARTY.

5. ISSUES AND ORGANIZATIONS: SA CARNEIRO SAW AS THE PRINCIPAL CAMPAIGN ISSUES THE ECONOMY, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND DECOLONIZATION. THE PPD EXPECTED TO SCORE HEAVILY ON THE LATTER AS A RESULT OF MPLA RECOGNITION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE SOCIALISTS HAD A STRONG SECOND-LEVEL TEAM AND WERE BETTER ORGANIZED FOR THE CAMPAIGN THAN THE PPD, BUT THE PPD HAD BETTER ECONOMISTS THAN THE PS. GREATEST FAILING OF PPD WAS ITS TOTAL DEPENDENCE ON ITS SYG (SA CARNEIRO). HE WAS GIVING THOUGHT TO KEEPING MAGALHAES MOTA AND RUI MACHETE OUT OF THE POST-ELECTION GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO DEVOTE FULL TIME TO PARTY MATTERS. AS FOR THE CDS, IT HAD UNEVEN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE THROUGHOUT COUNTRY BUT WAS DOING VERY WELL IN PRE-ELECTION CAMPAIGNING.

6. PRE-ELECTION ATMOSPHERE: DESPITE RUMORS, SA CARNEIRO DID NOT THINK CONDITIONS EXISTED FOR A LEFT-WING COUP. COMMUNIST STRATEGY SEEMED TO BE TO PROVOKE WAVE OF LABOR UNREST IN EFFORT TO POSTPONE ELECTIONS. HE HAD ONE UNCONFIRMED REPORT (HE STRESSED UNCONFIRMED) THAT COSTA GOMES CONFIDENTIAL

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HAD SUGGESTED POSTPONING ELECTIONS IN MARCH 15 REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEETING. THE GREATEST DANGER PORTUGAL FACED WAS A POSSIBLE ATTEMPT BY THE RIGHT WING, PROVOKED BY THE LEFT, TO TAKE OVER.

7. PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES:

(A) ADMIRAL PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO. A GOOD MAN BUT A

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POOR POLITICIAN. VERY MUCH "UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF SOARES."

(B) INTERIOR MINISTER COMMANDER ALMEIDA E COSTA. A GOOD MAN BUT NOT A PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITY DESPITE RECENT SPEUCLATION TO THIS EFFECT. THE ARMY WILL NOT ACCEPT A NAVY PRESIDENT. THIS ALSO APPLIES TO PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO.

(C) ARMY GENERAL EANES. VERY RELUCTANT TO RUN, BUT MIGHT BE PERSUADED. PROBABLY MORE IMPORTANT TO KEEP HIM AS ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF.

(D) AIR FORCE GENERAL SILVA CARDOSO. A GOOD MAN WHO
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WOULD PROBABLY BE ACCEPTABLE TO ARMY, BUT HE HAS HAD

HEALTH PROBLEMS.

(E) NORTHERN REGIONAL COMMANDER BRIG GENERAL PIRES VELOSO. I NOTED SALGADO ZENHA HAD FLOATED VELOSO'S NAME AS SOMEONE THE PS MIGHT ACCEPT. SA CARNEIRO POINTED OUT THAT HE HIMSELF HAD FLOATED VELOSO'S NAME BEFORE HIS OWN DEPARTURE FOR US. HE CONSIDERED VELOSO A VERY VIABLE CANDIDATE.

(F) AIR FORCE GENERAL GALVAO DE MELO. SA CARNEIRO DISMISSED HIM LIGHTLY. HE THOUGHT THE CDS WOULD ONLY RUN GALVAO DE MELO IF ANOTHER PARTY RUNS PINHEIRO DE AZEVEDO.

(G) COSTA GOMES. SA CARNEIRO THOUGHT HE HAD NO CHANCE, BUT COMMENTED THAT THE PPD HAD BEEN SOUNDED OUT BY CENTRAL MILITARY REGION COMMANDER CHARAIS ON POSSIBLE COSTA GOMES CANDIDACY. SA CARNEIRO SURMISED THIS FEELER COULD ONLY HAVE COME FROM MELO ANTUNES.

(H) MELO ANTUNES. SA CARNEIRO FINDS MELO ANTUNES' PHILOSOPHY DISTASTEFUL, BUT ADMITTED HE HAD PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN TURNING BACK LAST YEAR'S COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE. HE CHARACTERIZED ANTUNES AS AN INTELLIGENT AND ASTUTE POLITICIAN WHO ENJOYED SUPPORT IN THE ARMY. EANES, FOR EXAMPLE, VERY MUCH ADMIRES HIM. ANTUNES SAW HIMSELF AS A COMPROMISE PRIME MINISTER IN THE EVENT THE ELECTIONS FAIL TO GIVE A DECISIVE VICTORY TO ANY PARTY. ANTUNES IS NOW MANEUVERING TO LAUNCH A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE WHO WOULD BE AMENABLE TO HIS INFLUENCE. BOTH COSTA GOMES AND EANES POTENTIALLY FALL INTO THIS CATEGORY.

8. COMMENT: SA CARNEIRO'S ELECTION PREDICTIONS, LIKE THOSE OF SOARES, HAVE TO BE TAKEN WITH A CERTAIN DEGREE OF SKEPTICISM. NOBODY CAN REALLY TELL AT THIS POINT WHETHER THE PS OR THE PPD IS IN THE LEAD, ALTHOUGH EVERYBODY SEEMS TO AGREE THAT THE CDS IS ON THE WAY UP AND THE PCP ON THE WAY DOWN. THE PS IS BETTER ORGANIZED, AS SA CARNEIRO CONCEDES, BUT SA CARNEIRO IS QUITE CONFIDENTIAL

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RIGHT IN POINTING TO MPLA RECOGNITION AND LAND REFORM AS SOCIALIST HANDICAPS. WHETHER THE SOCIALISTS WON OR LOST ON THE OPORTO CONFERENCE IS A DEBATABLE POINT. BUT, THE PPD ALSO EXPENDED VALUABLE CREDIT IN SPOILING THE SOCIALIST SUMMIT.

9. A POST-ELECTION COALITION OF THE THREE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES SEEMS A FAINT HOPE IN VIEW OF THE ANTIPATHY

BETWEEN SA CARNEIRO AND SOARES AND THE LATTER'S CURRENT DETERMINATION TO GO IT ALONE. SA CARNEIRO CORRECTLY ANALYZES THE STRAINS WITHIN THE PS, ALTHOUGH HE OVERPLAYS PS-PCP COOPERATION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL. THE PCP ALSO PLAYS UP LOCAL PS-PCP COOPERATION FOR ITS OWN PURPOSES. IRONICALLY, THE PPD'S DEPENDENCE ON ONE PERSONALITY WHICH CONCERNS SA CARNEIRO IS ALSO THE BIGGEST STUMBLING BLOCK TO A PS-PPD COALITION. A POST-ELECTION PARTY REALIGNMENT IS OF COURSE ALWAYS A POSSIBILITY, AND SA CARNEIRO'S QUEST FOR A MORE CONFORMABLE IDEOLOGICAL HOME REFLECTS THE PPD'S GREATEST WEAKNESS: ITS SEARCH FOR SUFFICIENT POLITICAL SPACE BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT AND RIGHT.

10. SA CARNEIRO UNDERSTOOD MY POINT ABOUT DANGERS OF DRIVING THE SOCIALISTS TOWARDS THE PCP, BUT I DOUBT MY ARGUMENT WILL HAVE MUCH EFFECT. THE MORE SA CARNEIRO CAN LINK THE PS IN THE PUBLIC MIND WITH THE UNPOPULAR COMMUNISTS THE MORE VOTES HE CAN PICK UP, AND HE IS IN THE CAMPAIGN TO WIN. COINCIDENTALLY AND UNFORTUNATELY, HIS STRATEGY DOVETAILS WITH THAT OF THE COMMUNISTS WHO ARE MORE THAN READY TO WELCOME THE PS WITH OPEN ARMS. THE SOCIALISTS ARE DETERMINED TO RESIST THESE BLANDISHMENTS, BUT IF THEY FAIL TO MAKE A STRONG SHOWING IN THE ELECTIONS THEIR LEFT WING WILL BECOME MORE POWERFUL AND A WHOLE NEW SET OF PRESSURES WILL BE EXERTED ON SOARES AND SALGADO ZENHA.
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